

**LEA Application Part II**

**Phoenix Middle School**

**Turnaround Model**

**Detroit Public Schools**

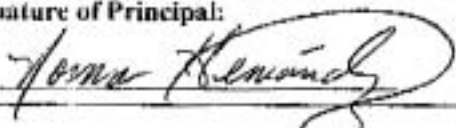
**ATTACHMENT III**

**SCHOOL APPLICATION**

**SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANT – 1003(g)**

**FY 2010 – 2011**

**The LEA must provide evidence of a comprehensive needs assessment and the thought process that it engaged in to formulate each school plan. The following form serves as a guide in the thought process. Please submit this form with the application.**

School Name and code Phoenix Elementary	District Name and Code Detroit Public Schools
Model for change to be implemented: Turnaround	
School Mailing Address: 7735 Lane, Detroit, Michigan 48209	
Contact for the School Improvement Grant:  Name: Norma Hernandez  Position: Principal  Contact's Mailing Address: 7735 Lane, Detroit, Michigan 48209 Telephone: 313-849-2419 Fax: 313-849-1170 Email address: norma.hernandez@detroitk12.org	
Principal (Printed Name): Norma Hernandez	Telephone: 313-849-2419
Signature of Principal: x 	Date: 8-13-10
The School, through its authorized representatives, agrees to comply with all requirements applicable to the School Improvement Grants program, including the assurances contained herein and the conditions that apply to any waivers that the District/School receives through this application.	

## SECTION I: NEED

The school must provide evidence of need by focusing on improvement status; reading and math achievement results, as measured by the MEAP, Mi-Access or the MME; poverty level; and the school's ability to leverage the resources currently available to the district. Refer to the school's Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) School Data and Process Profile Summary report.

1. Explain how subgroups within the school are performing and possible areas to target for improvement. (The following charts contain information available in the school Data Profile and Analysis).

### Sub Group Academic Data Analysis

Percent of Sub-group meeting State Proficiency Standards

**See attachment for required data.**

Group	Reading			Math		
	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Social Economic Status (SES)						
Race/Ethnicity						
Students with Disabilities						
Limited English Proficient (LEP)						
Homeless						
Neglected & Delinquent						
Migrant						
Gender						
Male						
Female						
Aggregate Scores						
State						

### Sub Group Non-Academic Analysis

Year: 2009-2010

Year: 2009-2010

Group	# Students	# of Absences		# of Suspensions		# of Truancies	# of Expulsions	Unduplicated Counts	
		>10	<10	In*	Out*			In*	Out*
SES									
Race/Ethnicity									
Disabilities									
LEP									
Homeless									
Migrant									
Gender									
Male									
Female									
Totals									

Year: 2009-2010

Group	# of Students	# of Retentions	# of Dropouts	# promoted to next grade	Mobility	
					Entering	Leaving
SES						
Race/Ethnicity						
Disabilities						
LEP						
Homeless						
Migrant						
Gender						
Male						
Female						
Totals						

### Enrollment and Graduation Data – All Students

Year: 2009-2010

Grade	# of Students	# Students enrolled in a Young 5's program	# Students in course/grade acceleration	Early HS graduation	# of Retentions	# of Dropout	# promoted to next grade
K							
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							
11							
12							

### Number of Students enrolled in Extended Learning Opportunities

Year: 2009-2010

Number of Students in Building by grade	# Enrolled in Advanced Placement Classes	# Enrolled in International Baccalaureate Courses	# of Students in Dual Enrollment	# of Students in CTE/Vocational Classes	Number of Students who have approved/reviewed EDP on file
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					

2. Identify the resources provided to the school (in particular, other state and federal funds) to support the implementation of the selected model.

### School Resource Profile

The following table lists the major grant related resources the State of Michigan manages and that schools may have as a resource to support their school improvement goals. As you develop your School Improvement Grant, consider how these resources (if available to your school) can be used to support allowable strategies/actions within the School Improvement Grant.

A full listing of all grants contained in No Child Left Behind (NCLB) is available at: [www.mi.gov/schoolimprovement](http://www.mi.gov/schoolimprovement).

<input type="checkbox"/> General Funds  <input type="checkbox"/> Title I Part A <input type="checkbox"/> Title I Schoolwide <input type="checkbox"/> Title I Part C <input type="checkbox"/> Title I Part D	<input type="checkbox"/> Title I School Improvement (ISI)	<input type="checkbox"/> Title II Part A <input type="checkbox"/> Title II Part D <input type="checkbox"/> USAC - Technology	<input type="checkbox"/> Title III
<input type="checkbox"/> Title IV Part A <input type="checkbox"/> Title V Parts A-C	<input type="checkbox"/> Section 31 a <input type="checkbox"/> Section 32 e <input type="checkbox"/> Section 41	<input type="checkbox"/> Head Start <input type="checkbox"/> Even Start <input type="checkbox"/> Early Reading First	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Education
<b>Other: (Examples include: Smaller Learning Communities, Magnet Schools. A complete listing of all grants that are a part of NCLB is available at <a href="http://www.michigan.gov/schoolimprovement">www.michigan.gov/schoolimprovement</a>.</b>			

## **SECTION II: COMMITMENT TURNAROUND MODEL**

**Evidence of a strong commitment should be demonstrated through the district's ability and willingness to implement the selected turnaround model for rapid improvement in student achievement and proposed use of scientific and evidence based research, collaboration, and parental involvement.**

**Using information gathered using the MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA), provide the following information:**

**Describe the school staff's support of the school improvement application and their support of the proposed efforts to effect change in the school.**

Detroit Public Schools and the Detroit Federation of Teachers (DFT) have established an agreement focused on enhancing student achievement through Instructional, Economic and Operational Reforms in the establishment of Priority Schools. Priority Schools intend to offer a rigorous educational program, which includes extended day learning and measurable expectations for school reform.

To implement the Priority Schools' reform, an agreement was established between the district and the Union, with provisions to accommodate the necessary and unusual requirements to implement the needed change for this reform-creative teaching methods; acceleration of improved student achievement as measured by MDE standards; creative scheduling; dedicated staff assigned to each school; extended school day/extended year; and parental and community involvement. Staffing at Priority Schools shall be on an application basis. A district Selection Committee has determined criteria for the selection of school staff. Interested Detroit Federation of Teachers members must apply for assignment to a Priority School and be selected via an interview by the Selection Committee. This process allows qualified candidates to seek a position to serve within a targeted Priority School.

Phoenix will satisfy all requirements of the Turnaround model by:

- Replacing at least 50% of the staff.
- Adopting new governance provided through the Priority Schools agreement and implementing new instructional programming provided by the external lead partner, Pearson K-12 Solutions.
- Increasing instructional time for both students and staff.
- Provide appropriate social-emotional and community oriented services and supports.

As a Turnaround School, our staff members were given the option of remaining at the school to support our reform efforts and were automatically eligible to interview for jobs at our school or up to two other Priority Schools. Those who were not interested in working at Phoenix or unwilling to support the processes described in this school improvement application, were placed in an eligibility pool for non-Priority Schools. As a Turnaround School, several of our teachers have expressed their personal commitment to our school turnaround and interest to engage in prescribed professional development as outlined in

the settlement proposal (December, 2009) of the Detroit Public Schools and the Detroit Federation of Teachers. Phoenix also expects to have a significant percentage of new hires, which will have been screened and interviewed to ascertain their commitment to the Priority School model. We believe that the current staff is committed to the school improvement process and will support the proposed efforts to effect change.

With many new staff members, I have planned a visioning process to create a new mission for Phoenix which defines our beliefs and daily practices that are necessary to realize our goals. Once the entire staff has been secured and configured, I will also seek individual commitment from staff for their support and alignment to our turnaround goals. Each staff will be asked to identify their strengths and the ways in which they will utilize their strengths to support the dramatic turnaround expected in our school.

As a Turnaround school, 50% of our staff will be returning. The teachers that are being asked to return have demonstrated their commitment to dramatic improvement by putting in the extra effort, committing to extra time beyond the traditional school day, and have benefitted from professional learning opportunities. Priority school teachers have a clear description of the performance expectations associated with their new position and the increased demands associated with dramatic improvement.

This past year, we started to experience success in improving student achievement. We will build on our foundation of success and small wins and leverage this experience with our new staff. The staff that participated in the summer program, the BELL program, demonstrated their level of commitment and implemented the curriculum with true fidelity. They used frequent assessment, pre and post tests, and planned collaboratively to address student needs. These staff members demonstrated their extraordinary commitment to our school community.

Over the last two years, we have taken specific steps to improve our school culture. Teachers understand the importance of consistent classroom management and holding students accountable. The culture of school has already improved significantly. We have increased our attendance rate and student discipline referrals have decreased. We have also significantly reduced the presence of gangs in our school through significant partnership with federal and local law enforcement and other local agencies.

The staff that remain at our school have seen the impact of our efforts for the last two years and will serve as role models for the increased expectations both for their professional practice and for student behavior so that it becomes more deeply embedded into our school culture. The continued refinement of a school culture dedicated to a safe learning requires commitment and perseverance from the entire community. As our culture continues to improve, parents will feel more welcome in school, and students will understand the new culture of school.

As a turnaround school, we know that we cannot expect different results if we do not change the way we have done our work in the past. Teachers will be asked to identify the time they have available for the extra commitment required to turn the school around. Are they willing to assist with Saturday events, tutoring after school, and extracurricular activities? We will avail ourselves of the flexibility in working with our staff to identify more flexible work commitments and to offer financial incentives for reaching significant achievement growth targets.



Shared Decision Making (SDM) supports distributed leadership and is a process by which the School Leadership Team (SLT) will work collaboratively with the Principal in identifying issues, defining goals, and monitoring progress. Phoenix will establish a school leadership team consisting of the principal, assistant principal (if applicable) and other staff members. This team, consisting of no more than 12 members, will be in place by September 1, 2010, and an opportunity will be provided annually to change the composition of the team.

Team decisions will be made in accordance with the established policies and practices for shared decision-making and agreements must be reached by consensus. The principal, and other members of the school staff, will carry out the implementation of all Leadership Team decisions. Phoenix's SLT will establish a Professional Development Committee that will collaboratively design school-based job-embedded professional development focused on increasing student achievement. The Professional Development plan will be informed by the comprehensive diagnostic review conducted by Pearson K-12 Solutions. Within the plan, options are available for banking of equivalent times for extended Professional Development seminars.

The staff at Phoenix will have the option to participate in the School – Based Performance Bonus Program incentive system. As teachers significantly increase student performance on the MEAP, the performance bonuses will be awarded during the Fall of 2011 and 2012.

The principal is committed and willing to support the proposed efforts to effect change as described in this plan. The principal has been instrumental in the changes that have already occurred in the school. She has secured support from numerous agencies and foundations to transform the culture of Phoenix. Effective leaders lead by example and serve as a model for their staff. An effective leader commits to making resources available to meet staff needs and works to remove barriers that may impede progress.

We are confident that together with the Pearson K-12 Solutions team, we can implement solutions that specifically address the significant needs identified in our Michigan Department of Education Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA). We have selected the Pearson K-12 Solutions Model, a research based model, an approved provider by the Michigan Department of Education, because of its alignment with our needs and our vision for success.

The STEP (School Transformation/Turnaround Education Partnership) model provides systemic comprehensive support for building capacity for sustained school improvement and sustained school turnaround. The STEP model integrates 10 research-supported core elements:

**1. Systematically Plan for School Improvement.** Using a thorough diagnostic assessment, K-12 Solutions builds on the MDE CNA by visiting our school and collecting additional data through the following action steps:

- Performing a comprehensive diagnostic review including classroom observations, student and teacher focus groups, interviews with administrators,

surveys of teachers, parents and students and an analysis of lesson plans and curriculum.

- Conduct a review of the Interoperability of technology systems to identify and remove technology roadblocks that may exist.
- Assessing the quality of the community engagement plan to ensure the involvement of important partners and stakeholders in the school improvement process as it begins.
- Facilitate the creation and commitment to a mission and vision to focus all school improvement efforts.
- Through collaboration with our school stakeholders, the K-12 Solutions team will customize the STEP model and create a customized Theory of Action that will direct the development of our Implementation Plan that specifically address our needs.
- Create an Evaluation Plan, which will monitor, manage, and report outcomes throughout the development and implementation of our school improvement initiative.

**2. Develop Instructional Leadership.** Strong leadership is a necessary component to successful school turnaround programs (Berends et al., <sup>i</sup>2001; Duke, 2004<sup>ii</sup>). Without effective leadership, schools are less likely to address practices that impact student achievement in a coherent and meaningful way (Marzano et al., 2005<sup>iii</sup>). The following action steps will be included in this component:

- To prepare our principal to be an instructional leader and effective manager, the STEP model develops leadership skills via a five day Leadership Training Institute.
- The Pearson Achievement Advisor will provide ongoing mentoring and assistance to the principal on issues that are most important to developing instructional capacity in teachers and in removing roadblocks to teaching and learning.
- The Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) will be formed to guide the work of job-alike teams in year one that will transition to Learning Teams (LT) in year two.
- A school leadership team will be formed to facilitate school based decision making and monitor school improvement efforts and initiatives.
- The STEP model will provide **our principal**, and teachers with the knowledge and management skills for effective instruction that leads to student and teacher success and sustained improvement.

**3. Create Collaborative Education Partnerships.** School reform initiatives have a greater chance of being enacted and sustained when the community is actively engaged

as an empowered change agent (Arriaza, 2004<sup>iv</sup>). To make school partnerships a reality we will:

- To make school improvement a success, we will bring faculty, staff, parents, business, and community leaders together with administrators to form an effective education partnership.
- Key community representatives will be invited to meet quarterly with representatives of our faculty, staff, parents, and principal as the STEP Advisory Committee. This committee will participate in planning and problem solving. This leads to accountability, buy-in, rigorous implementation, and the sustainability to deliver the expected outcomes.

**4. Emphasize School Culture.** For students, positive school culture is linked to a strong sense of school membership, which in turn is linked to academic and behavioral outcomes, such as fewer incidents of disciplinary referrals and victimization (DeWit et al., 2003<sup>v</sup>; Christle, Jolivette, & Nelson, 2007<sup>vi</sup>). Evidence suggests that the best intended efforts to turn around schools and enhance student learning and achievement do not succeed if school culture is ignored. The following action steps will place an emphasis on school culture:

- Gather data about student, teacher and parent aspirations for the students at Phoenix.
- Identify gaps in perception that may exist among the groups and identify root causes of any problems that surface.
- Collaboratively create solutions to the following issues:

Attendance

Expulsions, suspensions and alternatives

Truancies

Academic failure and retention

Violence and Gang activity

We are committed to building a culture of high expectations and aspiration at our school.

**5. Embed Achievement Support.** Our teachers and principal will receive direct, onsite guidance from the K–12 Solutions team. The STEP model includes a dedicated achievement support team of local, onsite Achievement Advisor and DPS Instructional Coaches to serve as models, mentors, and oversee the implementation Plan.

- The Achievement Advisor will act as coach for the principal and link to the Instructional Coaches.

- Instructional Coaches will provide “at elbow” support for our teachers ensuring that professional development activities become embedded in classroom practice.

**6. Align Curriculum.** In a well-functioning school, curriculum, assessment, and instruction are closely aligned so that **what is written is taught, and what is taught is effective**. When even one of the components is out of alignment, instruction is less than effective. To ensure alignment of the curriculum:

- During the diagnostic phase, the curriculum will be audited to determine alignment and quality.
- If misalignment is evident, The K-12 Solutions team will work with Phoenix to effectively align our school’s curriculum with Michigan standards to build an aligned, supportive pipeline that verifies students are prepared to transition successfully from grade to grade.
- Teachers are taught to unwrap the standards and identify clear learning targets aligned to the standards and specific student’s needs.
- Targets will be taught to mastery with the support needed to make sure every student is able to meet the expectations.

**7. Optimize Conditions for Teaching and Learning.** We will begin the process by:

- Observing teacher performance, delivering targeted professional development accompanied by coaching
- Creating opportunities for collaborating for improving instruction and providing tools teachers need to examine the effectiveness of their teaching and to personalize instruction.
- Through classroom observations, the ability of teachers to effectively manage classrooms will be determined.
- School-wide management support systems will be identified. Gaps will be addressed to ensure classroom environments that provide the conditions in which teachers can teach and students can learn.

**8. Foster Knowledge Driven Decision-Making.** Collecting, analyzing, and using a variety of data types effectively are important components of accountability and school improvement. To support this process we will:

- Provide teachers with professional development to become informed, collaborative data users.

- The K–12 Solutions team will help us create benchmark assessments using the current DPS Interim Assessment System, Learning Village, to create formative assessments.
- Facilitate the use of data tools for understanding and improving our practice. We are certain this will lead to improved student achievement.

**9. Utilize Technology for Learning.** We need easily accessible, accurate, reliable, and timely assessment data so we can become knowledge driven decision makers who can personalize instruction to insure that all students are learning. We will provide teachers with:

- Training to retrieve information from data systems fluently.
- Support for the interoperability of existing technology systems
- Professional development to examine how technology is used to enhance instruction and extend learning opportunities for students.
- Technological support so we can adequately meet our needs to become data users and our students' needs for personalized learning.

**10. Evaluate for Continuous Improvement.** Our Evaluation Plan, that is aligned with our customized Theory of Action and Implementation Plan, is created as part of the planning process described in STEP 1. Building in evaluation during the planning process will save valuable time and resources by identifying the information needed for monitoring implementation. This will include:

- Providing feedback to stakeholders regarding progress.
- Identifying the need for a change of course in a timely manner.
- Documenting short-, mid-, and long-term outcomes.

## **Phases of School Improvement**

To implement STEP, we use a phased approach that is customized to address the priorities identified from Phase I-Diagnostic Evaluation for Nolan to implement school improvement plans.

### **Phase I—Diagnostic Evaluation, Planning, and Start of Implementation**

Pearson's comprehensive STEP model includes two components specifically designed to create a comprehensive view of the set of potential metrics for success; collaborate on the creation of a custom implementation and evaluation plan; and, then use those plans to evaluate and demonstrate success.

We start by Systematically Planning for School Improvement through a process where we seek to understand the unique needs of each Arizona school. This process includes a needs analysis that we call a comprehensive school diagnostic evaluation.

Borman et al. (2003) note the strong relationship between the quality of comprehensive school reform implementation and positive effects on education outcomes. The systematic approach to STEP planning and implementation we use has many benefits. It requires methodical thinking and planning, which highlights areas of strength and weakness and therefore allows schools to think through possible scenarios to identify potential barriers and support to successful implementation.

### **Pre-Visit Diagnostics**

Before going on-site, we collect a variety of documents for analysis. These include, but are not limited to the following:

Curriculum documents

Demographics

History of improvement interventions and initiatives

Prior school audits

School calendar and schedules

Parent/Student/Faculty School Handbooks

Longitudinal student data

### **On-Site Diagnostics**

Pearson's K–12 Solutions members perform extensive observations, interviews, and surveys to develop a baseline of current conditions while visiting the partnering school site and analyze current and historical documents that the school provides before the onsite visit. Surveys are used to better understand student, parent, and staff perceptions and aspirations.

Since the customized STEP is based on the diagnostic visit, we do an extensive review of the following areas:

1. Consistency and quality of classroom practices, routines, and teaching strategies
2. Effectiveness in the use of data to inform instruction, personalize learning, and allocate resources, plus linkage of data to the budgeting process
3. School organization and collaboration effectiveness—including processes for peer development and priority setting, school calendar, and scheduling
4. Quality of facility and infrastructure—including interoperability of technology, capacity, and use of systems

5. Quality and fidelity of curriculum implementation—including identification of gaps in curriculum, teacher plans, and the alignment of teacher work to state standards
6. Community communication and engagement strategy—including an understanding of the goals and aspirations of the students and the community, and beliefs in college as an option

Part of the planning process is to determine the schools' readiness alongside a developmental continuum. This allows us to do the following:

- Agree on the school's current position along that continuum
- Provide a view of what it will take to move along that continuum
- Establish a framework for priority setting
- Establish a mechanism to appropriately pace the introduction of innovative new school design elements

We provide a high-level view of the developmental continuum in the following figure:

Instruction & Learning					
Quality & Interoperability of Systems					
Aspiration & Engagement Culture					
Organizational Effectiveness					
Effective Use of Data to Inform & Plan					
Quality of Community Engagement Plan					
Quality & Use of Core Curriculum					
	Nascent	Evolving	Effective	High Achieving	Global Role Model

Developmental Continuum. Our K–12 Solutions team measures a school's current conditions using this rubric.

### Developing Clear Implementation and Evaluation Plans

As Maddux and Cummings (2004) note, absent an explicit statement and a clear understanding of how a given initiative is expected to produce changes in student learning, the implementation of educational innovations “can be based only on intuition, trial and error, superstition, popularity, or random means unlikely to be quickly productive in any way.”

Our K–12 Solutions team will work with Phoenix staff and community to collaboratively develop a customized Theory of Action to guide our school improvement work through the STEP process. Furthermore, a clear Implementation Plan is needed to guide the hard work of school improvement. From the Theory of Action, senior members of our K–12 Solutions team develop an Implementation Plan in collaboration with identified stakeholders. The purpose of the Implementation Plan is to provide a roadmap for school improvement by identifying:

- Required action steps
- Timelines
- Benchmarks by which to evaluate progress
- Performance indicators by which to measure success
- Roles and responsibilities for each action item, including the data collection and reporting of program monitoring and performance results

The last step is the development of an Evaluation Plan that encompasses all key elements of the Implementation Plan. The Evaluation Plan documents the outcomes, the plans for measuring those outcomes, and a plan for monitoring the implementation itself. Using a participatory evaluation model in which the client is a key contributor to the design and implementation of the evaluation, a collaborative plan for both formative and summative evaluation is developed.

Timelines, benchmarks, assessments, and outcomes are addressed as well as the data collection and analysis plan for sharing results.

### **Monitoring the Plans' Progress**

Collaborating with school administrators, our K–12 Solutions team will build a schedule for regular reviews over the course of the year to assess the progress against the plan's goals and priorities. The Program Manager records and monitors the planning, implementation, and execution of the program through weekly phone conferences designed to communicate the planning, implementation, and execution of the program among the entire K–12 Solutions team.

A series of meetings are also scheduled to share the Theory of Action, Implementation Plan, and Evaluation Plan with all stakeholders. We schedule an annual event in which we share evaluation results with all stakeholders to inform them of the progress of the school improvement efforts, where challenges exist, and to celebrate successes. The participatory evaluation model dictates that stakeholders contribute to the interpretation of evaluation findings in order to make them meaningful and useable to enhance success of the work.

### **Phase II—Leadership and Teacher Development**

To gain the leadership skills necessary to lead the STEP model and sustain continued school improvement growth, key district administrators will begin the Language of



Leadership certification program with a five-day Principal Leadership Institute led by our K–12 Solutions team.

Also during Phase II, the STEP model provides weekly extensive and intensive professional development customized for each school, differentiated for each teacher and targeted to meet the goals of the implementation plan. Our professional development programs focus on building instructional capacity to accomplish the following:

- Unwrapping the standards to clarify content, learning skills, and performance expectations for mastery learning and developing aligned curriculum guides that explicitly direct teaching
- Developing a Language of Instruction to create a school-wide vision of effective learning routines and instructional practices consistently executed to accomplish grade level student learning.
- Implementing elements of effective instruction (including blended instruction) and instructional strategies that correlate highly to student learning and engagement
- Improving the academic achievement of diverse student populations through evidence-based professional development programs in mathematics, literacy, response to intervention (RTI), and for English language learners (ELLs)
- Using data to inform instruction and personalize student learning

As school opens, embedded achievement support is provided by two important K-12 Solutions team members. Pearson's onsite support team consists of an Achievement Advisor and Instructional Coaches to oversee the implementation plan and verify that the customized STEP goals are realized. These on-site Pearson staff will be based at Phoenix and become familiar faces to teachers, administrators, and students. These important members of the K–12 Solutions team will be visible as they work at the school site making themselves available to support the components of the STEP as well as closely monitor implementation.

The Achievement Advisor serves as the principal's coach and provides onsite leadership development and support. The Achievement Advisor also provides professional development for teachers and mentors the principal to effectively lead their Instructional Leadership Team.

Instructional Coaches are based at the school and provide “at elbow” support for teachers as they apply new instructional strategies, employ new technology for instructional, and collaborate to provide differentiated learning that meets the needs of all students.

### **Phase III—Continued Leadership Development and Collaborative Teacher Learning**

While all elements within the STEP model are addressed within the implementation plan and supported by the embedded achievement team, Phase III solidifies and builds the Learning Teams (LT) environment. LT provides a collaborative instruction model that brings together teachers to learn from each other, refine their skills to improve student performance, and self assess their progress. Based on 15 years of research conducted in

public schools, LT helps establish an infrastructure of leadership and ongoing professional development that engages teachers to refine their teaching and produce better student results. Learning Teams not only improves student achievement and school culture, but also builds within schools' capacity to continuously improve teaching and student learning and sustain a challenging, collegial, and productive work environment that promotes teacher development and retention.

In the second year, our STEP model continues to build instructional capacity to improve student learning and school effectiveness. We have found that training needs to be extensive to produce highly functioning teacher workgroups that actually improve teaching and student achievement. A five-year, 15-school quasi-experimental design study (Saunders, et. al., 2009) demonstrated that statistically significant gains in student achievement (gains over and above that of our comparison group and state averages) emerged only when site-level training and assistance were provided. This reinforces the value of strong leadership training in affecting change.

From this research, we developed our Learning Teams Leadership Training and Assistance program, which is designed to develop strong instructional leaders. The program is composed of the following components:

- Instructional Leadership Institutes and follow-up institutes
- Monthly regional meetings throughout the school year
- Monthly services throughout the year delivered directly the school
- District-level settings and services
- Ongoing evaluation of Learning Team implementation

#### **Phase IV: Building Internal Capacity for Sustained and Continuous Improvement**

Our goal in the first two years of the project is to build sufficient foundations of achievement and capacity to allow for continued and sustainable progress and to set the stage for our eventual step down process. During each phase, we use an integrated program evaluation process to carefully monitor progress and to serve as the basis for ongoing adjustments and improvements to the customized STEP for a given school site or district. Pearson's STEP provides AZ schools with the data they need to monitor progress and improve instruction.

#### **2. Explain the school's ability to support systemic change required by the models selected.**

The dramatic change that will occur in our school will impact the entire community – our staff, parents, and students. Research shows that if children feel safe and valued, they are much more resilient. Our school is committed to addressing the social and emotional needs of students. The school culture will support continuous improvement for everyone, including our students, in the following ways:

- Building positive relationships with every child every day

- Developing the skills of the leadership team to specifically understand and support the social and emotional learning needs of our students
- Providing professional development and coaching for our staff to help them embed a deep understanding of how to meet the social and emotional learning needs of our students
- Developing relationships within the community to access and leverage resources to help meet the social and emotional learning needs of our students
- Increasing the use of small learning communities within the school day and during extended learning time
- Increase the ability of our staff to communicate with our Spanish-speaking students and their families, approximately 65% of our school's population

Our staff will include many members that did not have the opportunity to experience the improvements that have already occurred. We understand that transformation is not easy, but it is necessary if we are to improve the lives and the futures of our students. We often discuss the importance of alignment of the curriculum – what is written, what is taught, and what is assessed should be clearly aligned. This is also true for school culture. Our actions, attitudes and beliefs must all align and be consistent – so that we can affect the change our students deserve.

We are committed to providing significant professional learning opportunities for our staff to increase their effectiveness in teaching and learning. These learning opportunities will be job-embedded in a collaborative environment of dialogue and continuous improvement, supported by our instructional coaches and Instructional Leadership Team. Through professional development and learning, we are committed to continuous growth and improvement. In order to affect the dramatic change needed for our school, our staff will need continued collaborative opportunities to learn and grow together, continuously and with fidelity of implementation of the STEP model. Effective and honest collaboration increases reciprocal accountability so we learn and grow together as we internalize the learning that occurs during our professional development. Long-term change in professional practice requires time, effort and the opportunity to practice and receive feedback. The ongoing support of our instructional coaches will help us improve the school culture to increase its commitment to teaching and learning. In addition, it is critically important that we recognize the leadership of our administrative staff in encouraging the way and leading with the end in mind.

Improved teaching and learning has its greatest impact on students that are present, attending school every day. In our culture of poverty, there are many reasons why students do not attend school, and we are committed to improving their attendance. Attendance is a multi-faceted issue. For us, attendance record keeping has been problematic for several reasons. First, our technology is far from reliable because of the age of our computers. We also need to have all teachers understand the importance of accurate record keeping so we can employ the strategies to improve student attendance. With the numerous problems that have demanded our attention and the 'business' of our school, the overwhelmed administrators have not been able to devote the time necessary to support the accountability associated with improving attendance. To help over

overcome these deficiencies, we would benefit from an Attendance Coordinator that would help us do the following:

- Assure period by period attendance completion providing the opportunity to identify absent students at the first occurrence.
- Run period reports against homeroom attendance to help us ensure accuracy in record keeping.
- Make home visits and telephone calls for our most frequent absent students and document these visits.
- Our students come from extremely impoverished environments and all of the social and economic challenges associated with poverty. In order to access the full array of government service, our parents often need access to accurate information about their student's attendance records. An attendance coordinator will help our parents access the services they need to meet their basic needs and those of their children.

Systemic change necessitates an assessment of the strengths and abilities of the staff so we can leverage our collective strengths to implement our goals of dramatic, positive change. Math achievement requires our continuing attention and we have implemented Algebra in our 7<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum, increasing the rigor of our classes to better prepare our students for high school. Since many of our students are several years below in academic achievement, meeting this increased rigor will present a particular challenge. We will be working towards a creative solution that involves accelerating our math curriculum, accessing technology in a 'twilight' program to appeal to our overage students, and providing dual credit towards high school course requirements. As a result, we will conduct a needs assessment to determine the strengths and areas of concern around math pedagogy. This will help us support the professional learning of our teachers particularly with our math achievement.

We are prepared to partner with Pearson K-12 Solutions and begin a collaborative process, customized to the needs of our students and our school, and supported through resources that will optimize conditions of teaching and learning. We will collaboratively develop a customized Implementation Plan that is informed by a comprehensive process that begins by describing our present reality and defining what we want to achieve. We are confident that the scientifically and evidence based strategies will be effective for reaching the widely shared outcomes; therefore, we support a partnership with K-12 Solutions to implement the STEP model to build capacity and ensure continuous growth and progress for all of our students.

We believe that this plan will allow us to build capacity for sustaining continuous improvement for these reasons:

- Building leadership is a crucial component of effective and sustained turnaround. Our comprehensive Leadership Institute will provide research-based strategies to support their initial efforts. Then, this knowledge building will continue throughout the year through weekly meetings with the Achievement Advisor and monthly cohort conversations.

- The K-12 Solution team will train, mentor and support Detroit educators to become effective Instructional Coaches (IC).
- The Instructional Coaches will continually model effective instructional practice for our teachers so that they acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to support the continuous improvement of our instructional program throughout the school. We will develop an effective Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) so that practices and protocols will be embedded within our work culture, thereby distributing leadership to enable each teacher to become a knowledge driven decision maker.
- Improved committee structures and practices will enable us to effectively link home, school, and the community in supporting student achievement.
- A positive school culture will communicate and support high aspirations and expectations for all.
- Our teachers will collaborate in small learning communities employing the Learning Team (LT) model. LT will effectively mentor and model new teachers that join our faculty and support their becoming focused on meeting the needs of each student.
- In Years 2 and 3, K-12 Solutions will mentor and support teachers leaders to assume the role of Learning Team advisor providing for the seamless transition once the external provider has stepped away.

Given the structure and support that K-12 Solutions brings to our school and our faculty, we are confident that we will be able to sustain the process of continuous improvement.

**3. Describe the school's academic performance in reading and mathematics for the past three years as determined by the state's assessments (MEAP/MME/Mi-Access).**

GRADE	READING			MATH		
	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010
<b>3 Not Met</b>	<b>42.9%</b>	<b>71.4%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>48.6%</b>	<b>46.7%</b>	<b>19.4%</b>
<b>Met or Exceeded</b>	<b>57.1%</b>	<b>28.6%</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>51.4%</b>	<b>54.3%</b>	<b>80.6%</b>
<b>4 Not Met</b>	<b>66.7%</b>	<b>66.7%</b>	<b>62.9%</b>	<b>61.2%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>44.1%</b>
<b>Met or Exceeded</b>	<b>33.3%</b>	<b>33.3%</b>	<b>37.1%</b>	<b>38.8%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>56.9%</b>
<b>5 Not Met</b>	<b>72.1%</b>	<b>64.7%</b>	<b>61.9%</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>64.7%</b>	<b>75.6%</b>
<b>Met or Exceeded</b>	<b>27.9%</b>	<b>35.3%</b>	<b>38.1%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>35.3%</b>	<b>24.4%</b>

GRADE	READING			MATH		
	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010
<b>6 Not Met</b>	<b>49.6%</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>55.8%</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>53.2%</b>
<b>Met or Exceeded</b>	<b>50.4%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>44.2%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>46.8%</b>
<b>7 Not Met</b>	<b>66.2%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>50.5%</b>	<b>69.1%</b>	<b>62.1%</b>	<b>64.5%</b>
<b>Met or Exceeded</b>	<b>33.8%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>49.5%</b>	<b>30.9%</b>	<b>37.9%</b>	<b>35.5%</b>
<b>8 Not Met</b>	<b>67.2%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>79.4%</b>	<b>62.6%</b>	<b>81.1%</b>
<b>Met or Exceeded</b>	<b>32.8%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>20.6%</b>	<b>37.4%</b>	<b>18.9%</b>
<b>PHOENIX</b>						

Under our new building leadership, the academic performance of our students increased at grades 3 and 4. These classroom teachers increased their use of differentiated instruction, applied best practices, and continuous progress monitoring. In addition, these teachers nurtured their students, helping to develop students' social skills and support students' commitment to trying harder in school. In contrast, we did not see this same commitment from all of our teachers. They were not as willing to improve their professional practice and rarely availed themselves of professional development opportunities. The level of commitment of the staff was clearly a factor in raising student achievement.

All of our special education students were mainstreamed at least 50% of the time in all of our academic classes. Our new school culture is committed to supporting the academic achievement of all special education students, helping teachers use strategies effectively to support the learning of special education students. We are expecting these efforts to positively impact student learning.

#### **4. Describe the commitment of the school to using data and scientifically based research to guide tiered instruction for all students to learn.**

##### **Addressing Student Needs Through Tiered Instruction**

Our response to intervention program will include a focus on increasing the quality of the core first instruction and a clearer understanding of the different types of interventions. The STEP model uses a 3-Tier instructional framework (e.g., Vaughn, Wanzek & Fletcher, 2007) which suggests three mandatory elements to enhance student learning and reduce the number of students who become at-risk for problems in a content area:

**Research-based core program** which focuses on the critical elements of effective instruction in the targeted content area (e.g., reading, math).

**Progress monitoring** of all students is administered regularly to determine instructional needs and to guide instructional decisions.

**Ongoing professional development** focuses on progress monitoring, elements of a successful program in the targeted content area, and features of effective instruction (e.g., independent and cooperative learning, scaffolded learning).

These tiered solutions follow the industry's baseline standard:

Tier 1 = on grade level / core instruction

Tier 2 = strategic intervention

Tier 3 = intensive intervention

The solutions consist of basal, supplemental intervention, and assessment products, as well as integrated professional development. The solutions are designed to promote the use of assessment data to inform instructional decisions.

### **Core Instruction**

**Core instruction** consists of research and best-practice based teaching principles that are designed to help prevent students from slipping into Tier 2 or Tier 3 groups. Core instruction provides opportunities for teachers to engage students; activate prior knowledge; instruct them in whole or small groups depending on need; deliver explicit instruction; and provide scaffolded and differentiated instructional strategies. Encompassing these practices of effective instruction is a consistent course-based framework for focusing on essential concepts, questions, and big ideas that challenge students to apply their knowledge in new situations. Additionally, our instructional coaches will support teachers in delivering effective instruction and monitoring student progress.

### **Interventions**

With support from the Instructional Coaches, teachers carefully monitor interim formative reports to understand what students have learned and define what instructional interventions are needed. The interventions can be selected from a virtual library of strategies aligned to student mastery, or custom crafted to meet the specific needs of the students on the varied tiers. The identified strategies support the struggling student and assist them in reaching mastery.

Pearson has a vast library of interventions that are:

- Developed by recognized experts, practitioners, and researchers in math and literacy
- Research-based and have data to support their effectiveness
- Explicit and systematic, providing scaffolded instruction, embedded routines, and ample opportunities for practice and opportunities for active learning and application

- Designed to teach skills to students who do not benefit adequately from core reading and math instruction
- Designed to meet the needs of English language learners, providing opportunities to hear and practice oral language, read and write English words and sentences, and experience language devoted to exploring concepts and developing core vocabulary

### **Mastery Learning**

Our quality core instruction will also incorporate a mastery learning model. Gentile and Lalley (2003)<sup>vii</sup> synthesized literature reviews and meta-analyses of hundreds of studies and drew six conclusions as summarized by Downey et. al (2009)<sup>viii</sup>:

- Student achievement using a mastery learning model is superior to traditional teaching approaches.
- Students in mastery learning groups scored higher on knowledge retention tests after several weeks or months than did those in traditional teaching groups.
- The higher the passing standard, the larger the gains by those students in mastery learning groups.
- Students taught with mastery learning are significantly more likely to report positive attitudes and confidence in their abilities.
- Teachers using mastery learning in their own classes increased their expectations, as well as their attributions, for student achievement and what causes it.
- Regarding memory by fast and slow learners, the amount initially learned determines how much is forgotten. Fast and slow learners forget at the same rate once they have mastered material to the same level using different pacing.

We believe that mastery learning verifies to teachers and administrators that students have learned the essential skills, knowledge, and processes that are required for success on high stakes assessment and in life. To provide maximum transfer of what students have learned to a situation or problem on a test, our teachers will learn to structure instruction to parallel the types of learning students encounter on a test.

To support mastery learning and its focus on clear learning targets for students, we will use a gradual release instructional model which involves effective modeling, focused, guided practice, independent practice, and subsequent application of the learning by students. Student practice will include the effective use of feedback to improve student learning and increase student motivation.

### **Formative Assessment and Progress Monitoring**

Traditionally, data are collected and rarely analyzed or used to inform instructional adjustments in the classroom, not for self-assessment, problem solving, reflection or discovery. School improvement requires that the cultural working conditions shift so that teachers and principals become skilled, informed, collaborative data users.



Our teachers will increase the use of formative assessment. Our instructional coaches will support our teachers as they meet together and discuss the progress of their students. Teachers will use more informal assessment as well, checking for student understanding so that they can make real time adjustments in their instruction. We will use the Learning Village Assessment system to more formally assess our students at benchmark levels and plan instruction accordingly. We will be collaborating much more frequently as grade level teams and content level teams, using our common planning time to formulate our next area of instructional focus. We will also address alignment across the grades and between the grades to assure consistent expectations for student performance.

We will maximize the use Accelerated Math and Accelerated Reader. After analyzing our reading scores and identifying the root causes, we will include 'reading to learn' strategies across all content areas. Using data from Prevent, an early dropout warning system, we will modify the master schedule to reflect additional instructional supports for our most at risk students, including using our Academic Coach to ensure success for each student. Our weekly grade level common planning will reflect the use of data from our formative assessments and inform our instructional approach for the upcoming week. Our Instructional coaches will participate in these grade level meetings and provide resources and leadership during these meetings.

We will increase the frequency of progress monitoring, formally and informally. Progress monitoring indicates where our students are responding to improved instruction and additional intervention. Our benchmark assessments provide teacher feedback on how individual students are demonstrating proficiency against grade-level standards.

### **Coaches and Collaboration**

Within the classroom we will continue to tier instruction and differentiate for students, maximizing our staff resources. Student grouping will be ongoing during classroom instruction, providing the teacher the opportunity to provide just-in-time intervention and additional instruction for students that may be struggling. We plan to utilize student response technology offering another strategy to engage students and involve them in self-monitoring of their learning. We will also use our SSAs (Student Support Advisors) and Ed Techs to provide additional support within the classroom, during additional instructional blocks, as well as in our extended learning program. We will also be trained in SIOP strategies which will benefit all of our students, not just our English language learners. Sheltered instruction is particularly effective with vocabulary deficient students, highly evident in high poverty students.

Math and literacy coaches will be used to disaggregate data and support the development of short cycle common formative assessments. These formative assessments will include items from Learning Village, DPS curriculum pacing guides, as well as teacher generated questions. The information from this data will drive the planning of tiered instruction to meet specific needs of students, ultimately resulting in mastery of clear learning targets.

Teachers and students will have access to technology for interventions, enrichment, and accelerating the curriculum. In addition, curriculum resources include ancillary technology components that support teaching and learning. Samples of our use of technology for learning will include:

- SMART boards – Teachers will be trained on the effective use of SMART boards.
- Document cameras will be used to vary the delivery of instruction and to provide an easy method to model learning targets for students through the display of exemplars.

Additionally, our principal, as an informed instructional leader, understands and advocates for student mastery and the use of the gradual release model to maximize instruction in support of our primary goal of school improvement. Professional development, protected collaboration time, and materials for teachers to affect this change, to support mastery for their students, will provide evidence of this support.

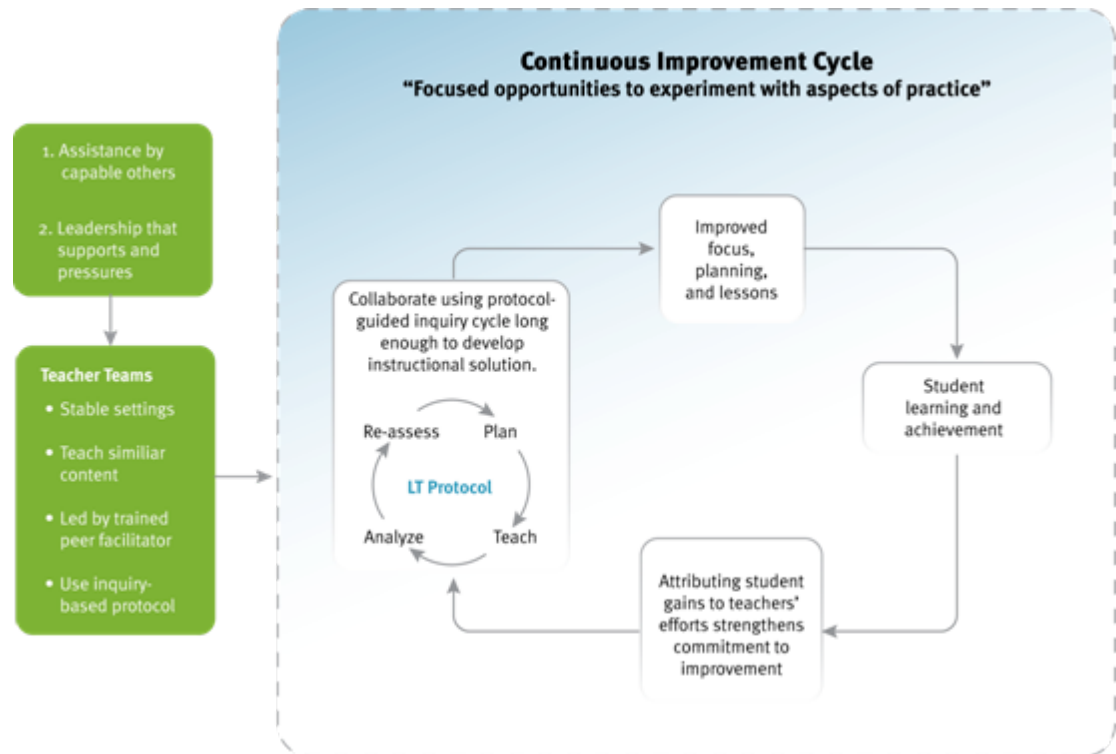
##### **5. Discuss how the school will provide time for collaboration and develop a schedule that promotes collaboration.**

Our master school schedule provides time for one hour meetings on three Wednesdays each month. As a school, we have the potential to 'bank' this time to create one three hour session for more in-depth professional learning. We will use our common prep time and grade level planning meetings for teacher collaboration and professional learning. In addition to our weekly grade level meetings, we will provide additional common instructional planning for our 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade math teachers. Because of the added rigor we provided in our math curriculum by adding Algebra as our required 7<sup>th</sup> grade course, our Art, Music and PE teachers will attend the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade math common planning meetings so that they can support math instruction, using monthly learning targets as their cross-curricular focus.

This planning will be protected time for teacher professional development and collaboration. Together we will examine the calendar, establish meeting and collaboration times, and then demonstrate the importance of these times by considering them of the highest importance. We will identify time for collaborative planning within the school day by building a schedule that supports common planning time for job-alike teachers while students are involved in music, physical education, media, and computer classes. In addition, teachers recognize that professional development and collaboration are a priority and will often occur before the students arrive or after they leave.

Pearson's STEP model provides extensive job-embedded professional development targeted to meet the needs identified through the comprehensive diagnostic review. The instructional coaches focus their work in support of the school's limited number of initiatives contained in their implementation plan. The impact of professional development and instructional coaching will be carefully monitored and its effectiveness will be determined by the extent to which teacher's instructional practices have positively impacted student achievement. We will support the transformation of small learning communities to become fully functioning, collaborative Learning Teams (LT). This well-researched, scalable model for teacher collaboration engages educators in the systematic study of student instructional needs.

Our school will identify teacher leaders representing every grade level to become facilitators of teacher work groups that will become Learning Teams. These teacher-leaders will meet each month as the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) to analyze assessment results, monitor the progress of school improvement, debrief teacher workgroup meetings, and plan for upcoming LT meetings. The ILT will meet each month after the school day.



**Making Change in Familiar Settings** LT focus on making familiar settings highly effective by encouraging meaningful contributions to improved teaching and learning.

Recent studies show that establishing and sustaining teacher learning teams in Title I schools can significantly increase student achievement (Gallimore et al., 2009<sup>ix</sup>). In addition, results from a five-year study of Pearson's collaborative LT model indicate that LT provides more focus in grade-level and ILT meetings on student academics, systematic instructional improvement and increase in retention as teachers become empowered with greater instructional decision-making.

Research shows that LT schools have greater gains in student achievement and better overall school functioning, including:

- Tighter links between teachers and administrators by focusing on academic goals
- Increased administrator participation in meetings focused on improving instruction
- More tightly coupled meetings that were less frequently cancelled or re-purposed

- Better teacher understanding and more positive expectations of assessment data
- Improvement for collecting, analyzing, and using data over time
- Attributions for student achievement more focused on teachers' planning and instruction, rather than teacher and student traits, and other non-instructional explanations (McDougall, Saunders, & Goldenberg, 2007<sup>x</sup>).

Effective implementation of the LT program involves maximizing the time available with the school year to improve teaching and student learning. Delays and wasted time compromise the effort. As we collaboratively develop our Implementation and Evaluation Plan, we will create a year-long calendar for professional development and collaboration and protect those meeting times. Cancellations do little to build teachers' trust and their sense that these meetings are to be taken seriously.

**6. Describe the school's collaborative efforts, including the involvement of parents, the community, and outside experts.**

We will continue to build on practices for increasing collaboration with our parents and the community. We developed a parent-student compact. However, our parents need to become more familiar with their responsibilities to support their child's education. During our back to school night, we will review the assurances we have made to our parents and students. We know that our parents could be more connected to the school. Over 60% of our parents have limited English proficiency skills. We would like to increase the skills of our teachers to speak to our parents in their native language, helping them feel more welcome and respected. For our students, the teachers will be able to use Spanish to help explain difficult academic concepts.

Some of our existing collaborative efforts include: Urban Neighborhood Initiative, University of MI, community education outreach and the Ross School of Business, our sister school to support student writing at Deerfield Elementary in Livonia, MI, the Women in Leadership Program at MI State, Career Exploration at Madonna University, and the Chamber music society of Detroit.

Additionally, we will seek additional collaboration with the Detroit Police Department, hiring a police officer to support community outreach, helping us reduce the incident of gang activity within and around our school. The police officer will build capacity by developing the safety plan for the building, creating policies to describe the annual revision process, and keep our staff informed about the latest information about gangs, and other ills that impact our student's ability to concentrate on their school work.

For the past two years, we have been committed to improving the climate in our school. The school has a very large population of gang members with generational familial ties. We have created partnerships with parents and students as well as several community, state, and federal organizations to help clean up the gang activity in our school. The gang members are still here but the climate is such that it is understood that we are "neutral" ground. We would like to employ a half time Detroit police officer. This individual will serve several functions for our school:

- **Community Outreach** to help the community understand how to recognize and report suspected gang activity.

- **Capacity building** for our staff - The police officer will design a new safety plan for our school and then teach the staff how to revise the plan annually, reflecting any changes in applicable laws, policies, and regulations.
- **Education** – The police officer has access to the latest trends regarding gang activity. The police officer will provide the staff with the latest information about gangs, etc, enabling us to continue to improve the safety of our school and community.

This program will be in place for 2 years to help institutionalize the increased behavior expectations and familiarity with the ever-changing gang culture.

Our Community Involvement Coordinator will help strengthen community collaboration by assisting with the LSCO to organize meetings, volunteers, and to serve as liaison between school and parents and to provide and coordinate parent training, particularly literacy assistance. We will work with this individual to organize volunteers for the following year to assume these duties. We will develop a Parent volunteer coordinator to address concerns parents express about the safety of their students on the way to school by organizing street corner monitors and identifying safe routes to school.

We want to engage and support our parents through ELL and literacy classes for parents, by offering computer programs such as Rosetta Stone, supplemental materials, and English without Barriers. Our parents are able to access these resources in our parent room. We will also increase our translation services by seeking an internship with a graduate student.

We also want to increase the use of technology in supporting our students and our parents. We will be creating an electronic portfolio system for tracking the progress of our students, particularly the overage students. We also want to provide a Parent portal for accessing their student's grades and attendance and will provide support so our teachers can have their own web pages to share the learning in their classroom and to keep students and parents updated. .

Research indicates that as students approach middle school, their motivation, grades, and attendance tend to decrease. At Phoenix, we are committed to increasing the motivation of our students. We will institute a comprehensive student positive behavior and classroom management system, consistent throughout the school. We will utilize experts in the field to help us learn the most effective ways to motivate our student body, increasing their sense of academic self-efficacy, and lifelong aspirations. Our 'scholar dollars' program, the incentives that will support the positive behavior of students, will be funded to help us purchase small items that students find motivating (footballs, soccer balls, bicycle wheels, skateboard accessories, school supplies, et.) We will seek additional community donations to support the purchase of some larger items our students need such as dressers, pillows, shoes, coats, etc. We instituted this program over the summer and it was remarkable in the way it increased student motivation and increased attendance (see chart below). Students can use the 'dollars' to purchase necessities to help them meet their social and emotional needs met. For example, some students don't have dressers for their clothes or a bed to sleep in. Furniture stores will be

solicited for donations of dressers for students, body pillows, toothbrushes, etc. We will be offering 'high interest' after school mini-classes for our students and they can use these 'dollars' to purchase admission to these classes.

We will also institute student field trips as a way to reward the improved behavior and attendance of entire classrooms and grade levels. In order to increase our sense of community and to instill collective responsibility across the entire student body, we will establish rewards through our school wide positive school culture emphasis. Field trips have been very successful with our students in increasing their motivation and attendance and we want to build upon this early win.

We will seek collaboration from the community so our students can visit local high schools and area colleges. Many students do not believe they can be successful in high school or in college and we want to provide them the opportunity to observe the secondary school environment. One reason why our students tend to drop out of school is they don't feel connected or they do not believe postsecondary education is attainable. For almost all of our students, their parents may or may not have graduated high school and almost no parents are college graduates. Therefore, they do not have a vision of the possibilities associated with higher education possibilities. For some, the idea of being successful in high school is beyond their scope of experience. These visits will demonstrate that they can see themselves successful in high school and beyond.

### Parental Involvement

We look forward to involving parents more deeply in their children's learning as we are aware that there is strong research that parental involvement improves student achievement and positively affects student behavior, values, and character (McNeal, 1999<sup>xi</sup>).

Research indicates that family involvement positively affects outcomes for students (e.g., Catsambis, 2001<sup>xii</sup>). We want the same kind of outcomes that are supported by this research, including:

- **Higher achievement:** We need dramatic changes in achievement and are committed to partnering with parents and community members to create a shared vision and high expectations for all students to achieve.
- **Better attendance:** Increased student attendance is important for our school. If students are not in school, they miss significant opportunities for learning. We will use specific strategies to mobilize the entire school community to increase student attendance.
- **More responsible preparation for class:** We believe that parents want what is best for their child and that if they realize how important it is to check their child's homework, their child will benefit. We will use learning contracts to better communicate expectations with parents.

Other studies note that when schools communicate effectively and involve family and community members in activities, there is a decline in the need for student disciplinary actions (Sheldon & Epstein, 2002<sup>xiii</sup>). Our K-12 Solutions team will examine our current

systems of communication and together we will upgrade and implement more effective methods for linking home and school.

To demonstrate our commitment to fostering parental involvement, we will identify a *Parent Involvement Specialist*, who will coordinate and help facilitate all activities related to parent and community involvement. The Parent Involvement Specialist will be responsible for the following:

- Monitoring home/school connection
- Seeking community resources to support students/families
- Coordinating volunteer activities
- Coordinating and facilitating parent activities at the school
- Seeking community involvement to support identified gaps
- Identifying and supporting parenting and community education classes, working with the Academic Coach to schedule and provide classes to parents to support their student success.

### Community Engagement

We are committed to building a shared vision for school improvement with parents and community members through a STEP Advisory Committee that will be composed of key stakeholders representing parents, community members, education organizations, teachers, administrators, and staff members. By involving these stakeholders in oversight and decision-making, we will foster buy-in and support from groups that typically have power in presenting or removing barriers to effective school initiatives.

The primary purpose for the committee is to support our school improvement. Members must have a clear understanding of the scope of the needs uncovered in the Diagnostic Phase, have a clear grasp of the Implementation Plan, and become watchdogs of the Evaluation Plan. Each member serves as an advocate, sharing information within their stakeholder groups. Equally critical is their involvement in identifying potential barriers to the effective implementation of initiatives and important decision-making regarding removal of those barriers.

Additionally, community members, as our partners in learning, will be invited to participate in extracurricular activities for students, our thematic theatre presentations, and our mentoring program.

### Outside Experts

The K-12 Solution Team includes experts who have successfully led school turnarounds and are distinguished in the field of education. Dr. Jan Vesely has more than 30 years experience as an educator, school and district administrator, business leader and educational consultant and earned her EdD in Educational Leadership from Northern Arizona University. As Senior Vice President for K–12 Solutions, she is responsible for the design and implementation of the STEP model for comprehensive school improvement and school turnaround for schools and districts throughout the US. Dr.

Vesely was recognized as a school turnaround principal and her school was honored by the Center for the Future of Arizona as a “Beat the Odds” high-poverty, high-performing school.

We will have two Solutions Specialists supporting the implementation plan.

Ms. Roseanne DeCesari, Solutions Specialist, travels to schools and collects data onsite with our diagnosticians. She also works with other team members to synthesize results into a Diagnostic Report and to report results and recommendations to each school. In addition, Ms. DeCesari meets with schools to help identify the appropriate Intervention Model. Ms. DeCesari will bring more than 20 years of experience as an educator. Before joining Pearson, she served as a teacher and curriculum specialist in high-poverty and high-minority schools and, most recently, a principal of an Excelling school in the richly diverse Tucson Unified School District in Arizona. Ms. DeCesari co-facilitated an academy for prospective administrators and also served as a Principal Mentor in Title I Schools for the Beat the Odds Foundation. She has an MA in Education Administration from the University of Phoenix and a BA in Education from the University of Toledo.

Ms. Donna M. Anderson-Davis, Solutions Specialist, is part of our development team. She has been instrumental in designing the Leadership Institute and will also assist schools in the comprehensive diagnostic process and the creation of the implementation plan. Ms. Anderson-Davis brings more than 25 years of experience as an educator. Before joining Pearson, she served as Senior Director of Professional Learning for a national consulting firm where she trained and supervised a large consulting cadre. In addition, she has worked with hundreds of principals on their school improvement efforts across the United States. As a high school principal in north Denver, her school received special recognition for the dramatic gains in student achievement. She has completed her doctoral course work in Educational Leadership at Regent University and is completing her dissertation on the relationship between the leadership attributes and student achievement.

In addition, the K-12 Solution Team will provide access and support from the many Pearson partners to provide professional development, instructional tools, and technology that specifically fits our needs.



### SECTION III: PROPOSED ACTIVITIES

**1. Describe the proposed activities that address the required US Department of Education (USED) school intervention that the school will use as a focus for its School Improvement Grant.**

The K-12 Solutions STEP model deeply aligns with the Transformation and Turnaround models as outlined by the US Department of Education and is consistent with School Improvement Grants (SIG).

The K-12 Solutions STEP framework meets the required elements of the SIG Transformational Model for Tier 1 and Tier II schools in the following ways:

**a. Develop and increase teacher and school leader effectiveness:**

K-12 Solutions will provide professional development (PD) for our principal and teachers that includes:

- A five-day Principal Leadership Institute, monthly principal cohort trainings, and coaching from the K-12 Solutions Achievement Advisor (AA).
- A ten-day boot camp for the instructional coaches to provide a deep level of knowledge of coaching, facilitation, data collection, and high yield instructional strategies and lesson study and design.
- Professional development targets will be derived from the comprehensive needs assessment that is data driven, personalized, and focuses on research-based instructional practices
- Onsite DPS Instructional Coaches (IC) will support teachers to transfer new information and strategies into classroom practice
- Membership in professional organizations such as ASCD to provide additional resources and research to support our continuing professional learning
- Learning Teams implementation develops distributed leadership, improves the quality of instruction and instructional leadership, and increases retention and morale

**b. Implement comprehensive instructional reform strategies.** STEP focuses on research-based approaches to teacher development that have proven to increase teacher effectiveness and student achievement. The professional development process provides for collaboration, initiation, implementation, institutionalization, and renewal to build instructional capacity. School-based AA and IC provide targeted professional development, follow up, and on-the-job application support to improve instruction. Protected settings for ongoing professional development will be established and supported to permit collaboration and knowledge driven decision making. Alignment of curriculum to state standards and mastery learning supported by tiered instruction will be

implemented.

**c. Increase learning time and create community-oriented schools.** Time and the school calendar play an important role in student learning outcomes and in creating community-oriented schools. STEP seeks to provide opportunities that support the needs of all learners, maximize the use of school facilities, and extend and enrich learning experiences beyond the traditional school day, school calendar or school building. STEP will help our school define and optimize opportunities for increasing learning time and building community-oriented schools. We will maximize the use of technology supported instructional tools so that learning that is not limited by the school calendar or the walls of the school.

65% of our students are native Spanish speakers. Our teachers need to be able to communicate effectively with them and their parents. In a survey we conducted last year, many teachers indicated that they are very interested in learning to speak Spanish. We have a partnership with Oakland County to help provide these courses and the corresponding continuing education credits. In addition, we will provide classes on Saturday right at our school to provide teachers with an additional option for learning to speak Spanish. We will also provide the textbooks for the courses and Rosetta Stone software in the library and our parent room so that the entire community can avail themselves of these resources.

In order to help our teachers keep informed of the latest research regarding English language learners, we will fund scholarships so that teachers can attend the National Association of Bilingual Education conference. We will use this opportunity for the conference attendees to return to school and share their new knowledge with our entire staff, continuing to build our internal capacity, so that we can maximize our success with our English language learners.

**d. Provide operational flexibility and sustained support.** The STEP model is flexible and customized to the unique needs of each school through the systematic planning process. The K–12 Solutions STEP model is designed to build capacity and distributed leadership within the school. Gradual release strategies are built into the model from the start for a smooth transition to help internal staff sustain the school's transformation.

A more complete listing of the many activities associated with our plan is contained in Section III of this plan.

**2. Explain how the school will use data to inform instruction, guide decision-making, and design professional development related to the proposed activities.**

**i. Discuss how the school will use data to develop and refine its improvement plan and goals based on sub groups in need.**

Data about student learning is important in determining the effectiveness of the school and classroom. In addition, we the school also needs to review the actions of the adults, the professional practices that impact student learning. These adult actions include data on instructional planning (curriculum alignment, formative assessments, etc.),

instructional delivery (use of instructional strategies, learning strategies for students, etc), and classroom environment (climate, management, etc.). We will visit classrooms daily and collect data using rubrics and checklists and collecting evidence of student learning. To assure reliability in our classroom observation data collection, our Leadership Team, including our Instructional coaches, will participate in training to help us calibrate our observations and data collection methods. We will use Teacher Compass, a web-based application, to collect and analyze this data regularly. The data will be disaggregated to help assure that teachers are helping all subgroups improve their learning and levels of achievement.

Our monitoring will be continuous and will inform our weekly planning sessions with our embedded Achievement Advisor. The triangulation of data from a variety of sources will provide the most comprehensive look at the progress we are making with our student subgroups and the improvement of our teachers' instructional delivery. We will use this data to help monitor the implementation of our professional development and to identify additional areas needed for the ongoing professional development of our staff.

Feedback and evaluative data will be collected on all professional development activities and programs using a variety of data collection tools. The data will be used to further customize and improve future professional development activities.

As we review our data, we know that all of our subgroups are in need of improvement. Our teachers need additional knowledge and skills to be more successful with our special education and our ELL students. Our instructional coaches will be helpful in modeling and implementing these practices in our classroom. The ongoing monitoring will provide opportunities for continuous improvement and refinement in the growth of our teachers.

Our students, because of their significant learning deficiencies, require multiple opportunities for extended learning. These will include but are not limited to:

- in-school small group remediation and acceleration
- after school remediation and acceleration through the extended learning program
- extended learning opportunities in summer school
- the use of paid tutors during the school day to reduce our student to teacher ratio and to provide targeted intensive support for instructional needs based on analysis of student data

We have significantly increased the number of instructional minutes for math and literacy instruction, implementing a modified block schedule. We have doubled the number of minutes for literacy and math instruction for all grade levels. At our middle school grades, we will utilize a block schedule to provide the double dosing. Teaching in a block schedule requires the use of different approaches to instruction. The instructional coaches will support out professional learning in all areas of improving teaching and learning. We will also use the data from Prevent to identify additional professional learning to increase our staff's capacity to help reduce the incidence of school dropouts.

During the Diagnostic Review, K–12 Solutions team members will assess current capabilities, programs, and school capacity. They will observe classrooms, collect

surveys from students, parents, and staff about their perceptions of our school, and hold focus groups for faculty, parents, and staff. The team collects data and analyzes the following key factors:

1. **Consistency and quality of classroom** practices, routines, and teaching strategies
2. **Effectiveness in the use of data** to inform instruction, personalize learning, and allocate resources, plus linkage of data to the budgeting process
3. **School organization and collaboration effectiveness**, including processes for peer development and priority setting, school calendar, and scheduling
4. **Quality of technology infrastructure**, including interoperability of technology, capacity, and use of systems
5. **Quality and fidelity of curriculum implementation**, including identification of gaps in curriculum, teacher plans, and the alignment of teacher work to state standards
6. **Community engagement and communication strategy**, including an understanding of the goals and aspirations of the students and the community, and beliefs in college as an option

A summary of their findings will be compiled in a Diagnostic Report.

### **Theory of Action**

From the comprehensive diagnostic school review, a report with the aggregated data findings and recommendation will become the foundation of the ensuing Theory of Action. The Diagnostic Report will be shared with the school and district in conjunction with the beginning of work on the Theory of Action. The report might be considered a “state of the school” address where facts are supported by data and patterns are pointed out to key stakeholders.

At this point our key stakeholders “dive into the data” as we identify root causes that have hampered achievement in the past. We will identify well respected and visionary teachers, parents, and community members to participate in three days of collaborative discourse so that together we can develop a customized Theory of Action that will lead to our Implementation Plan.

The central focus of a systematic approach to initiative planning and implementation is the Theory of Action. With a Theory of Action, educators find, understand, and communicate the connections between school improvement strategies and what we know or suspect about how students learn. The Theory of Action specifies action steps that the school improvement team believes are required to bring about the outcomes of focus for our school. The Theory of Action is unique and personalized for our school and helps to map out programs to affect the intended change.

Developing a Theory of Action involves a number of steps that work iteratively. These steps broadly include:

- Define the problems that exist between current conditions and preferred reality.
- Define the root causes
- Identifying the **strategies and actions steps to address and close the gaps so that the schools goals are met.**
- Develop and align the implementation plan by which the strategies are expected to produce their intended outcomes

### **Implementation Plan**

Based on the developed Theory of Action, our stakeholders and the K–12 Solutions team collaboratively develop a clear Implementation Plan to guide the hard work of school improvement, to verify everyone is doing their part, and to demonstrate how and when it needs to be done.

Our Professional Development Plan is developed and driven by the problems identified within the Diagnostic Report with strategies/action steps identified to solve those problems. The professional development becomes a strategy written into the Theory of Action and the Implementation Plan. Our Instructional Leadership Team is committed to monitoring the effectiveness of professional development and evaluating its impact on student learning on a regular basis.

### **Evaluation Plan**

Senior members of the K–12 Solutions team, together with our school teams, collaboratively develop an Evaluation Plan that encompasses all key elements of the Implementation Plan. The Evaluation Plan documents the outcomes, how they will be measured, and a plan for monitoring the implementation itself. Timelines, benchmarks, assessments, and outcomes are addressed as well as the data collection and analysis plan and the plan for sharing results.

Data collected during the Diagnostic Visit establishes a baseline that determines direction for our school's improvement plan. Ongoing data, disaggregated by sub group when appropriate, will monitor the effectiveness of our improvement efforts and allow us to refine our improvement initiatives in a timely manner.

- ii. **Describe how the school will collect, analyze and share data with internal and external stakeholders. Include how the school will ensure that all administrators and teachers are able to access and monitor each student's progress and analyze the results.**

We will use a variety of mediums and platforms to communicate our continued progress with our constituents. These will include parent newsletters, monthly calendars, monthly parent meetings, weekly teacher celebrations and recognitions by principal, daily attendance thermometer/chart.

A series of meetings is scheduled to present the Theory of Action, Implementation Plan, and Evaluation Plan to all the stakeholders including the STEP Advisory Committee, district leaders, and our school community. A schedule for regular reviews of our progress is formally established and shared with these groups.

After the first semester, an Interim Evaluation Report is prepared by K-12 Solutions that specifically shares our progress on each of the identified outcomes and shared in the same manner.

### **Learning Village Interim Assessment System (IAS)**

Since even a glance at our test scores indicates the need to measure student achievement progress to ensure mastery of essential learning, we will utilize the district's an interim assessment system. The assessment system will provide rich and timely data for LT and ILT analysis, and allow for the close monitoring of our school improvement. We will utilize the Learning Village that will provide our teachers the tools and content required to create and monitor student progress through ongoing assessments.

The AA and our principal will closely monitor IAS data to ensure all students are learning and improvement initiatives are working. The AA and IC will participate in weekly teleconferences with remote K-12 Solutions Team members to inform them of our progress and elicit additional support as needed.

### **Instructional Leadership Team**

The primary responsibility of the Instructional Leadership Team will be to analyze data to inform the work of their professional learning teams. . The data from ongoing assessments will be available to all teachers and the principal so that through disaggregation of that data, specific learning needs can be identified, understood, and supported through appropriate instruction.

### **Classroom Instruction Data**

Classroom observations will be supported by a web-based application to provide our teachers and principal with teacher performance data. This tool can be used to disaggregate results rapidly and generate easy-to-read reports and graphs related to various performance indicators. In addition, the web-based application includes prescriptive resources to support ongoing feedback related to classroom observation data.

Ongoing classroom observational data is collected for a number of indicators linked to our Theory of Action, providing the teacher with dashboards to monitor their continuous improvement related to their instructional practice.

All of the classroom observation data is aggregated for our principal to use in formal feedback and evaluation processes, along with recommendations for improvement, with prescriptive support.

As our technology is being upgrades, we will be better equipped to access our data frequently from the Michigan Department of Education, our DIBELS, Accelerated Reader, Accelerated Math, Learning Village, and data on teacher classroom practices. The Prevent program will provide real time data to help us identify students at risk of dropping out of school.

Teachers will be monitoring student progress daily, and will increase their use of informal and formal assessments, driving instruction based on classroom level data.

The Classroom Performance System (clickers) will help students monitor their own learning, providing real time feedback on learning objectives, particularly for formative use during instruction. Our graduation coach will identify students that are struggling academically so that interventions can be utilized at the first sign of a problem.

Frequent assessment will be analyzed in our weekly planning meetings to plan instruction. Instructional coaches will review improved teacher performance data from classroom visits and plan subsequent PD. Our instructional coaches will review individual student data and grades regularly (weekly, bimonthly, etc). Particular attention will be paid to the progress of our mainstreamed special education students to ensure continued academic progress as stated in their IEPs.

### **Learning Village Interim Assessment System**

We will utilize Learning Village to support knowledge driven decision-making, so our teachers and administrators may keep a watchful eye on student learning. Our principal and our teachers will learn to analyze data based on curricular benchmarks and Michigan state standards.

The effective use of assessment for learning, relying on both summative and formative assessments will enable the principal to monitor the continuous progress of the improving instruction.

#### **iii. Describe how the school plans to adjust instruction based on progress monitoring and data results collected. Describe and name any local or national assessments used to measure student progress at each grade level.**

In addition to using DIBELS and other district assessments, our teachers will create common formative assessments to measure student progress on identified priority learning targets. This data will help predict performance on the MEAP assessments and help inform program planning for the following year. Quarterly assessments will be administered and analyzed to project trends in student performance, identifying opportunities for midcourse corrections.

We will offer an extended learning program to be used both for enrichment as well as instructional support. The extended learning program will support the whole child and provide academic as well as high interest offerings. Ongoing data analysis will include subgroup performance to identify program adjustments for the following year.

We will build on our previous success with the BELL program. This summer, our students made terrific progress both in academic performance and in attendance. We have had success with our extended learning opportunities this past summer. We had 304 students participate in the summer BELL program, grades K-8. The average attendance rate was 89.8% compared with the average attendance rate during the school year of 86%. The average growth in student performance in reading and math increased 6% and 8% respectively. Grade level details are provided in the table below. Note that rate of increase ranged from a mere 1% to 13%.

	Attendance		Reading			Math		
	Total Enrolled	Average Present	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Point Change	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Point Change
<b>Kindergarten</b>	10	90%	69%	75%	6%			
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Grade</b>	13	85%	67%	77%	10%			
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Grade</b>	24	91%	58%	62%	5%	59%	70%	11%
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Grade</b>	19	94%	70%	79%	9%	69%	75%	6%
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	22	86%	53%	56%	3%	48%	59%	11%
<b>5<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	22	95%	54%	56%	2%	43%	46%	3%
<b>All Phoenix Scholars</b>	304	89.8%	61%	67%	6%	53.5%	61.5%	8%

	Attendance		Reading			Math		
	Total Enrolled	Average Present	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Point Change	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Point Change
<b>6<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	58	90%	62%	63%	1%	56%	60%	4%



<b>7<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	67	94%	52%	65%	<b>13%</b>	47%	56%	<b>9%</b>
<b>8<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	69	84%	64%	72%	<b>8%</b>	53%	65%	<b>12%</b>
<b>All Phoenix Scholars</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>53.5%</b>	<b>61.5%</b>	<b>8%</b>

Continuous improvement reflects the ongoing use of data from a variety of sources that are used to make just in time, midcourse, and end of course adjustments. We recognize our need for an implementation that is effective and reliable. We will implement the following initiatives to meet our goal:

- Professional development for our teachers that is scientifically research based will support mastery learning, gradual release, tiered instruction, and differentiated learning.
- Coaching will provided to support the principal as instructional leader and the teacher as reflective professional
- Informal and formal teacher observations will monitor whether the PD is being consistently applied in the classroom.
- Materials that engage and support the diverse needs of students will be implemented and monitored.
- Formative benchmark and short cycle assessment will be created, implemented, and analyzed in core areas that are linked to Michigan state standards at all grade levels.
- Teachers will function in LT to analyze data from formative assessments and collaboratively develop lessons that support differentiated instruction.
- Students identified as not meeting the standards on benchmark assessments will receive supplemental instruction, including one-on-one teaching, re-teaching and re-modeling.

At Phoenix, we have a significant population of students that are several years behind in school. For example, we have 7<sup>th</sup> graders that are 14 and 15 years old, several years

older than their peers. We will be offering a staggered schedule for classes to accommodate an accelerated schedule, considering the following options:

- An accelerated one year curriculum that condenses the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum enabling students to advance two grades in one year.
- Staggering the schedule to that our overage students come to school later in the day attending school all afternoon.
- Dual enrollment option for accelerated 8<sup>th</sup> graders to earn partial credits for 9<sup>th</sup> grade during the summer. We will seek appropriate policy revisions are necessary to accomplish this goal.
- An accelerated curriculum that combines the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum and includes an accelerated 9<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum. This will enable the students to enter high school one semester ahead, reducing the number of years they are behind their peers.

Because of these initiatives we expect our students to show achievement gains on the benchmark and formative assessments created by our teachers and implemented by the beginning of the second quarter (November 4, 2010) and all assessments given in 2011-12 as we recognize the process of implementing these initiatives will need to be completed before significant impact is observed on the following high stakes tests:

<b>TIMELINE</b>	<b>TEST</b>	<b>GRADE-SUBJECT AREA</b>
October 12-20	Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP)	3-8 Math & Reading 4, 7 Writing 5, 8 Science 6 Social Studies
October 13-29	MAEP-ACCESS (Students w/IEP)	3-8 Reading/Writing & Math
Oct. 12-Nov. 20	MI-ACCESS (Students whose IEP indicates MEAP and MEAP-ACCESS are not appropriate)	3-8 English Language Arts 3-8 Math 5, 8 Science
November 2-December 11	Brigance Diagnostic Comprehensive Inventory (Special Ed. Students as determined by IEP)	1-2 Reading, Math
Dec. 7-11	Michigan Educational Technology Standards (METS)	8 Technology Literacy
Jan. 25-March 5	NAEP (Selected Schools)	4, 8 Reading, Math, Science
March 15-April 23	English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA) (Students eligible for bilingual	1-8 Listening, Writing,

	services)	Reading, Speaking
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- iv. **Discuss how the school has a clearly defined procedure in place for writing a professional development plan that aligns to the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) Standards for Staff Development (<http://www.nsdc.org/standards/index.cfm>) that focuses on context standards, process standards and content standards. If the school or LEA does not have a professional development plan in place, describe the process and timeline for completing a professional development plan.**

Our Professional Development Plan will be aligned with our Implementation Plan as described earlier. The Implementation Plan will identify strategies that need to be supported by professional development and will include monitoring professional development for levels of implementation and its impact of effectiveness on student learning. Teacher Compass, a web-based data collection system, will provide instructional coaches and administrators with an efficient way to provide teachers with ongoing feedback on their improving professional practices. The evaluation plan will provide quarterly data that reflects teacher self-evaluation on the effectiveness of the professional learning opportunities in which they have participated. The evaluation plan will also triangulate data that seeks to identify the professional learning opportunities that have had the greatest impact on improved teaching and learning so those practices can be replicated in subsequent years and with new teachers. Professional development will be provided by our K-12 Solutions team and is deeply aligned with the National Staff Development Council Standards for Staff Development that focuses on context, process, and content standards. Our professional development plan will be completed by October 2010 which will allow it to reflect the comprehensive diagnostics obtained through the Diagnostic Review while ensuring that it is in place to support timely implementation.

#### **NSDC CONTEXT STANDARDS**

##### **Developing an Integrated Network of Professional Learning Communities**

We will bring faculty, staff, parents, and business and community leaders together to form a diverse learning community and an effective education partnership through our **STEP Advisory Committee**. Key stakeholders meet quarterly with administrators and K–12 Solution team members and participate in planning and problem solving to provide accountability, buy-in, rigorous implementation, and sustainability to deliver the expected outcomes. We provide a structured agenda and focused expectations, which creates an atmosphere of purpose and importance in the meetings as members consider their school's progress and decide future implementation issues.

Our principal will attend a five day **Principal Leadership Institute** to develop a common Language of Leadership and Learning. Our principal receives ongoing coaching from the AA. The principal participates in an ongoing professional learning community through monthly **clustered principal workshops**.

Our principal and teacher-leaders representing every grade level/content area become the **Instructional Learning Team (ILT)**. Formation of this team, along with support and training from the embedded K–12 Solutions team, builds distributed leaders who facilitate teacher workgroups in the adoption and implementation of improvement strategies.

**Learning Teams (LT)** bring teachers together to learn from each other, refine their skills to improve student performance, and self-assess their progress. Based on 19 years of research conducted in public schools, LT helps establish an infrastructure of leadership and ongoing professional development that engages teachers to refine their teaching and produce better student results. LT not only improves student achievement and school culture, but also builds within schools sustainable capacity to continuously improve teaching and student learning.

### **Developing Leaders Who Guide Continuous Instructional Improvements**

Operating within the professional learning communities described above, our principal will demonstrate support and understanding by committing to continually develop as an instructional leader and provide resources necessary to enable teachers to become leaders through the ILT and improve their own instruction through the LT model.

Our principal will receive one-on-one coaching by the AA as well as guidance and support for distributed leadership and collaborative decision-making through our LT model. The K-12 Solutions team also facilitates monthly clustered principal workshops that provide skills training and support for leading change efforts.

### **Identify and Access Appropriate Resources**

STEP will help us build an implementation plan that addresses the needs identified by this process and assists us to identify and access appropriate resources. The LT teacher collaboration model provides a comprehensive protocol to identify a student need and act on it to produce improvements in student achievement. Dedicated school-site settings for teachers and administrators enable educators to engage in this work, with targeted assistance from LT advisors throughout the year.

The STEP model includes the use of technology to monitor the implementation plan.

An IAS is developed as part of the school's interoperable technology strategy to capture result data and generate evaluation reports. This resource, accompanied by training in data analysis and application, will create capacity within the school staff to carry out this evaluation using appropriate tools.

## **NSDC PROCESS STANDARDS**

### **Supporting Knowledge Driven Decision Making**

To make instructional decisions informed by data, teachers need access to current, disaggregated achievement data so they may use these data to inform teaching and differentiate learning for their students. Once in place, our teachers will receive training from the AA on effective analysis of student data provided by our new IAS and guidance from the IC to use these data as they plan instruction that meets the needs of all students.

### **Ongoing Evaluation**

A variety of metrics will be put in place to ensure that our school improvement plan is on track. One important measure will be ongoing teacher observations that will be supported by *Teacher Compass*, a web-based application that will provide teacher

performance data that will direct a personalized plan for professional development. This customizable tool can be used to disaggregate results rapidly, and generate easy-to-read reports and graphs related to various performance indicators.

Along with customizable evaluation and observation forms, *Teacher Compass* covers eight dimensions and includes a scoring system for the following:

- Planning and Preparation
- Knowledge
- Process of Instruction
- Assessment and Activities
- Classroom Climate
- Classroom Management
- Interpersonal Skills
- Professional Expectations

Providing trend data and reports, *Teacher Compass* can guide teachers to appropriate professional development based on their personalized data.

### Applying Research Based Solutions

The Achievement Advisor will provide professional development so that our teachers build instructional competencies using a variety of inputs, including professional development focused on content and research-based pedagogy to foster the implementation of effective learning strategies. Our teachers will learn how to support mastery learning through tiered instruction.

### Designing Effective Instruction

Curriculum, assessment, and instruction must align closely, so that what is written is taught, and what is taught is effective. The Achievement Advisor will work with teachers to effectively align our school's core curriculum with state standards. Guided by research-based curriculum standards, our teachers will develop a rigorous, relevant, and deeply aligned curriculum, which is revisited annually for revisions as needed (Frase, English, and Poston, 2000<sup>xiv</sup>). It specifies mastery learning goals, defining proficiency requirements, as well as instructional pacing. Deeply aligned curriculum will give our teachers more time to focus on lessons and provide more relevant content to increase student engagement.

### Informing and Equipping the Adult Learner

While initial professional development will address our entire staff to develop a common Language of Learning and the creation of structures to support school-wide expectations, ongoing and regular professional develop will be personalized to reflect the identified needs of our principal and teachers. On site Achievement Advisor and Instructional Coaches will help our teachers and principal implement improvement plans through ongoing research-based training and one-on-one support. We emphasize coaching because it provides job-embedded learning, which allows our principal and teachers to learn by doing, reflecting on their experiences.

### Collaborating for School Improvement

The Instructional Leadership Team and Learning Teams will provide effective teacher and administrator inquiry-based collaboration settings to identify student learning needs and instructional strategies, monitor effectiveness, and revise where necessary. Learning Teams allow teachers and administrators to assess instruction as it relates to student needs and helps reinforce knowledge learned through targeted professional development (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009<sup>xv</sup>; Goldenberg, 2004<sup>xvi</sup>).

## NSDC CONTENT STANDARDS

### Emphasizing School Culture

We will create a family-friendly and safe culture, where all students and families are respected, where educators feel respected and valued, and where students feel connected to their learning and their school. We will evaluate and adjust our practices to facilitate students' healthy social-emotional development without shortchanging academic development. Improving management structures, policies and practices, and home-school relationships can significantly improve school climate and produce greater cohesion among staff.

Based on findings from our Diagnostic Review, strategies will be developed to target the identified needs, through the collaborative Theory of Action and implementation planning processes. Our K-12 Solutions Team will provide strategies, as needed, to address a number of school culture areas. For example, Pearson works with the Quaglia Institute for Student Aspirations (QISA), whose researchers have identified eight conditions as critical in fostering and maintaining student aspirations. Student aspirations have been linked to student achievement. Districts that have targeted these eight conditions report higher attendance and decreased dropout rates (QISA, 2009<sup>xvii</sup>).

Additionally, Pearson's K-12 Solutions team will assist us to develop our own strategies, to encourage ownership and engagement in the process. Recommendations for improving school culture to improve student outcomes include interventions focused on student aspirations, a positive physical learning environment, and promoting high academic expectations.

### **Providing Professional Development that Supports Content and Pedagogy**

Weekly professional development sessions offer research-based instructional practices to address areas of need identified during the Diagnostic Review that are specified in our Theory of Action. The IC will provide one-to-one coaching for teachers so the new techniques and strategies become part of daily classroom practice.

Pearson has a wide variety of services and products to support teachers to optimize their teaching and learning including online, print, and professional development modules. Our customized Implementation Plan will guide the crafting and selection of services and materials to meet the unique needs of our school and the adult learning needs of our principal and teachers.

The IC provides site-based support focusing on instructional delivery and content pedagogy. Research indicates that embedded coaching has a positive effect on enhancing instruction and on student achievement (Matsumara et al., 2008<sup>xviii</sup>). The IC models and supports lessons, conducts lesson studies, and works in classrooms to improve instruction and support teacher efficacy.

Coaches are trained to conduct reflective conversations with teachers as part of their ongoing coaching and mentoring. Coaches develop a working rapport with teachers that enables them to reflect on their own teaching practice and to critically analyze their own teaching behaviors in order to determine areas of growth in pedagogy or delivery of the aligned curriculum.

- 3. List the individuals and job titles of the central office and school personnel who will oversee the school receiving School Improvement Grant – Section 1003(g) funds. Include the percentage of time dedicated to oversight of the school.**
- 4. The District will establish the Office of Priority Schools which will include an Assistant Superintendent of Priority Schools, Priority School Coaches, and a Priority School Budget Implementation/Compliance Officer. Collectively, this office will be responsible for monitoring and supporting each school with the implementation of the selected model. Each school will be assigned a Priority School Coach, who will be**



responsible for making direct contact with assigned schools weekly. Each Priority School Coach will be assigned no more than seven SIG schools. At the school level, the principal will be the primary point of contact responsible for ensuring the required components of the plan are fully implemented.

It is expected that Ms Martin will dedicate \_\_\_\_ of her time to the oversight of our school.

**5. Explain specific school improvement technical assistance and evaluation responsibilities needed. Include personnel responsible for coordinating such services.**

	TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE	DESCRIPTION	EVALUATION MEASURES	PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE
Sept. 2010	<b>SYSTEMATICALLY PLAN FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT Diagnostic Review</b>	Comprehensive collection and analysis of historical and current data	-Comprehensive Needs Assessment  -Perception Data from parents, students, teachers, staff (surveys, interviews, focus groups)	<b>K-12 Diagnosticians</b> collect data from diverse stakeholders
	<b>Diagnostic Report</b>	Summary of findings leading to Theory of Action	-Classroom observation data  -Leadership effectiveness surveys	<b>Senior K-12 Team Member</b>
	<b>Theory of Action</b>	Collaboratively agreed upon Theory of Action	-Achievement data over time	<b>Senior K-12 Team Member</b>
	<b>Implementation Plan</b>	Collaboratively developed IP	--Report delivered, shared/edited with key stakeholders:	<b>Senior K-12 Team Member</b>
	<b>Evaluation Plan</b>	Collaboratively agreed upon EP	Customized T of A  Customized IP  Customized EP	<b>K-12 Director of Evaluation</b>
Aug/ Sept. 2010  Oct- June  Sept- June	<b>DEVELOP INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP</b>	5-day workshop (instructional leadership & management skills)	-Workshop Evaluation  -Results from VAL-ED Leadership Effectiveness Survey  -Workshop Engagement Instrument	<b>Senior K-12 Team Member assisted by AA</b>
	<b>Principal Leadership Institute</b>	Monthly meetings to report progress and receive additional training	-Calendar and agendas	<b>K-12 Achievement Advisor (AA)</b>
	<b>Principal Cluster Workshops</b>			
	<b>One-on-One</b>			<b>K-12 AA</b>

	TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE	DESCRIPTION	EVALUATION MEASURES	PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE
Jan 2011  June 2011	<b>Training</b>  <b>LT Readiness</b>  <b>LT Launch Institute</b>	Weekly coaching  2 half-day leadership training for admin  2 day workshop for ILT & principal	   -Leaning Walk data   -Institute materials and evaluation   -Institute materials and evaluation	<b>K-12 Assoc. Dir. of LT</b>  <b>K-12 Assoc. Dir. of LT</b>
Sept./ Nov./ Feb./ June 2010-2013	<b>CREATE COLLABORATIVE EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS</b>  <b>STEP Advisory Committee</b>	Stakeholder reps:  -Parents  -Community members  -Educational Organizations  -Teachers  -Staff  -Principal	Meet quarterly to  -Oversee the IP  -Provide solutions beyond the school's reach  -Monitor progress  -Identify potential obstacles  -Brainstorm and develop solutions  -Champion the initiative  -Celebrate successes	<b>K-12 Achievement Director facilities these meeting Principal guides selection of members</b>
Sept.- June, 2010-2013	<b>EMBED ACHIEVEMENT SUPPORT</b>  <b>Coaches Boot Camp</b>  <b>Ongoing Coaching</b>  <b>Ongoing Training</b>	  10 day training for AA & DPS coaches  On site coaches to support PD and leadership training  Monthly training to support PD	-CBC Agenda and Evaluation  -Weekly one-on-one leadership training for principal  -Weekly teacher PD  -Teacher mentoring & classroom observation  -Monthly agendas	<b>Sr. K-12 Team Member</b>  <b>K-12 AA</b>  <b>DPS IC</b>  <b>DPS IC</b>  <b>K-12 Achievement Dir.</b>
Sept 2010	<b>ALIGN CURRICULUM</b>  <b>Audit Curriculum</b>	Examine current curriculum	-Curriculum Rubric  -Curriculum template	<b>K-12 Diagnostician</b>

	TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE	DESCRIPTION	EVALUATION MEASURES	PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE
Ongoing	<b>Revise Curriculum</b>	Refine curriculum to meet standards	-Curriculum pacing documents	<b>K-12 AA</b>
Sept 2010 Ongoing	<b>OPTIMIZE CONDITIONS OF TEACHING &amp; LEARNING</b>  <b>Teacher PD</b>  <b>Ongoing Coaching</b>  <b>Learning Teams</b>	Weekly Teacher PD  One-on-one support  Collaborative teacher learning communities	-Calendar & Agenda  -Teacher observation reports  -Personalized pd reports  -LT evaluation pieces	<b>K-12 AA</b>  <b>DPS IC</b>
	<b>KNOWLEDGE DRIVEN DECISION MAKING &amp; TECHNOLOGY FOR LEARNING</b>  <b>Interim Assessment System</b>  <b>Data Coaching</b>     <b>Tech Tools</b>	Audit current tech for formative assessment and achievement report  Identify & Implement system upgrades  Train Principal & teachers to analyze data to inform instruction  Identify and implement instructional tools to support personalized learning for students	-Analysis of strengths & weaknesses of current technology  -Installed upgrades  -Training manuals  -Training sessions evaluations  -Delivery & implementation of instructional tools	<b>Pearson technologist</b>  <b>K-12 AA</b>  <b>DPS IC</b>
Jan 2011  June 2011-2013  Aug 2011-	<b>EVALUATE FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT</b>  <b>Interim Evaluation Report</b>  <b>Annual Evaluation Report</b>  <b>Refreshed Evaluation Plan</b>	Follow up surveys, interviews, focus groups, observations  Summary of progress  Summary of progress  Creation of ER for following year	-Summary of data  -Summarized progress reports  -Sharing of progress reports  -Reprioritizing of outcomes and expectations based on current progress	<b>K-12 Diagnosticians</b>  <b>K-12 Director of Technology</b>

	TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE	DESCRIPTION	EVALUATION MEASURES	PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE
2013				

## Section IV: Fiscal Information

Individual grant awards will range from not less than \$50,000 to not more than \$2,000,000 per school, with grants averaging around \$500,000.

The MDE has asked for a waiver of section 421(b) of GEPA to extend the period of availability of the SIG funds, that waiver automatically applies to every LEA in the State seeking SIG funds. Accordingly, if an SEA is granted this waiver, an LEA must create a budget for the full period of availability of the funds, including the period granted by the waiver.

An SEA that requests a waiver of section 421(b) of GEPA to extend the period of availability of SIG funds may seek to make the funds available for up to two years beyond the regular period of availability. For example, without a waiver, FY 2009 SIG funds will be available until September 30, 2011. Through a waiver, those funds could be made available for up to two additional years – until September 30, 13.

## USES OF FUNDS

School Improvement Grant – Section 1003(g) funds must be used to supplement the level of funds that, in the absence of the Title I monies, would be made available from non-federal sources for the education of children participating in Title I programs. Therefore, **funds cannot supplant non-federal funds or be used to replace existing services.**

Improvement funds must be tracked separately from the Title I Basic Grant and the Section 1003(a) School Improvement Grant. Local fiscal agents are to place improvement funds in a Title I account assigned for school improvement. (This funding number must not be the same number as is used for the Title I Basic Grant award or Section 1003(a) School Improvement Grant.)

Intensive monitoring of grant implementation and evaluation will be required.

Since these are school improvement funds, districts may not combine funds into one account, and the amount awarded to each school must be spent on implementing one of the four turnaround models at the school.

The CFDA (Code of Federal Domestic Assistance) Number for this grant is #84.377A; 84.388A.

For a listing of allowable uses of funds, go to the guidance document listed on the USED website.  
<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/applicant.html>

**ATTACHMENT VI****Policies and Practices Change Analysis to Implement the SIG Final Requirements**

Depending on the intervention model selected by the LEA, some policy and practice changes may need to be implemented. Please indicate below which are already in place, which are under consideration, and which are not needed.

<b>Polices/ Practices</b>	<b>In Place</b>	<b>Under Consideration</b>	<b>Not Needed</b>
• Leadership councils Composition		<b>X</b>	
• Principal Authority/responsibility	<b>X</b>		
• Duties – teacher	<b>X</b>		
• Duties - principal	<b>X</b>		
• Tenure	<b>X</b>		
• Flexibility regarding professional development activities	<b>X</b>		
• Flexibility regarding our school schedule (day and year)	<b>X</b>		
• Waivers from district policies to try new approaches	<b>X</b>		
• Flexibility regarding staffing decisions	<b>X</b>		
• Flexibility on school funding		<b>X</b>	
<b>Job-Embedded Professional Development</b>			
Topic requirements (e.g., every teacher must have 2 paid days on child development every 5 years) Content	<b>X</b>		

<b>Polices/ Practices</b>	<b>In Place</b>	<b>Under Consideration</b>	<b>Not Needed</b>
• Schedule	<b>X</b>		
• Length	<b>X</b>		
• Financing	<b>X</b>		
• Instructors		<b>X</b>	
• Evaluation	<b>X</b>		
• Mentoring	<b>X</b>		
<b>Budgeting</b>			
School funding allocations to major spending categories • School staff input on allocation	<b>X</b>		
• Approval of allocation	<b>X</b>		
• Change of allocation midyear	<b>X</b>		
Major contracts for goods and services • Approval process streamlined		<b>X</b>	
• Restrictions (e.g., amounts, vendors)		<b>X</b>	
• Legal clarifications		<b>X</b>	
• Process		<b>X</b>	
• Stipulations (e.g., targeted vs. unrestricted spending)		<b>X</b>	
• Timeline	<b>X</b>		
• Points of contact	<b>X</b>		
Auditing of school financial practices Process	<b>X</b>		
• Consequences	<b>X</b>		

\*Modified from Making Good Choices – A Guide for Schools and Districts, NCREL, c2002, 1998

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